

SURGERY OF THE HAND. By R. M. Handfield-Jones, M.C., M.S., F.R.C.S.
E. & S. Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1940. Pp. 134, 95 Illustrations. Price 15s.
Postage 6d.

THIS work is divided into three parts:—Infections, Injuries, and Other Surgical Lesions.

The first two parts contain detailed accounts of infections and injuries, the essential features of which are clearly shown in many beautiful X-ray plates and diagrams. In fact, much instruction is to be gained by a study of the illustrations alone. The author is to be congratulated on his excellent exposition of the general principles underlying the treatment of these conditions. The methods of treatment are clearly described, and the importance of operating on a hand rendered bloodless by sphygomanometric pressure and under general anaesthesia is stressed on several occasions in various parts of the book.

The chapter on restoration of function is among the best of many good chapters, and throughout there is the tendency, highly to be commended, to write in simple language and with practical detail devoid of unnecessary theory.

The third part of the book has been rather condensed, and, compared with the other sections, appears in the light of a synopsis of rare surgical conditions of the hand. It is to be hoped when a second edition of this work is published, that the third part will be rewritten more fully and with the same attention to detail which characterises the earlier chapters.

Mr. Handfield-Jones is to be congratulated on a book which should soon find its way into the libraries of all practising surgeons.

DISEASES OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM described for Practitioners and Students. By F. M. R. Walshe, O.B.E., M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P. 1940.
Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. Pp. 288. 12s. 6d. net.

THE author states in the preface to this book that he has "tried to deal only with what is possible in general practice in the matter of diagnostic methods and of treatment" and "to strip the subject of unnecessary complexities." For this reason the subject of ventriculography and encephalography is dismissed in a few lines; no account is given of the newer method of electro-encephalography; and many of the rarer diseases, e.g., progressive lenticular degeneration, are not considered.

The book consists of 288 pages and is divided into two parts. Part I contains 41 pages devoted to the general principles of neurological diagnosis, and gives no more anatomical and physiological detail than is considered necessary for diagnosis. The remainder of the book is given up to the more common diseases of the nervous system, and a brief but most useful chapter is included on the psychoneuroses.

Although several workers have reported that vitamin B was found present in normal amounts in the blood plasma in subacute combined degeneration of the cord, disseminated sclerosis, etc., many clinicians still resort to vitamin B therapy in these diseases. It is therefore interesting to note that Dr. Walshe does not even mention this vitamin in the treatment of either "subacute combined" or disseminated sclerosis; and in the case of multiple neuritis he states that "the time has not yet come for a just assessment of the value of this mode of treatment . . . and extravagant claims should be treated with the greatest reserve." Referring to the recent claim made for vitamin E in checking the progress of motor neurone disease, we are reminded that "this claim has not been confirmed, and should be accepted with the greatest reserve."

The author has certainly succeeded in providing the general practitioner with a clear, authoritative, well-balanced practical guide, which should do much to remove that lack of confidence on the part of many practitioners which often results in disinclination to carry out proper neurological examinations.